

ETHEL'S EXPECTATIONS; OR, A MOTHER'S MISTAKE.

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"*Gerald's Dilemma*," etc., etc.

CHAPTER II.

DOROTHY'S SILK DRESS.



MR. MALDON had felt a little disappointed, as well as her daughter, that their old friend had not called or written after

that one visit, and so when she saw the letter in Ethel's hand, she put down the dress she was folding, to hear the news.

Ethel opened the letter and began to read it aloud; but her voice soon faltered, and she went on in silence, and her mother, looking over her shoulder, read to the end without a word of comment.

"DEAR MISS MALDON,—I am compelled to take a journey into Scotland, which must be my excuse for not calling upon you again before you leave the town. I have left orders with the gardener, that a basket of fruit and vegetables shall be sent to the cottage every week for you during my absence; for as they will not be used for my own table, your mother may possibly like them."

There were a few more commonplace words of apology for not calling, and a promise to write again as soon as he returned; but Ethel could not read any more, for blinding tears filled her eyes, and she ran away to her own room to hide the bitter disappointment she felt at the contents of this letter.

Her mother could sympathise with her disappointment, and when she went downstairs she told Dorothy not to ask her sister any questions about the letter.

"Ethel is disappointed, then," said Dorothy.

"Yes, dear, she is; but we will not mention the matter again. We shall be very busy to-day, and that will help her to forget it, I hope. To-morrow we shall begin our new life in the cottage, and I trust that, in the fresh interests with which Ethel will be surrounded, Mr. Sutherland will soon be forgotten."

In this hope, however, the widow was doomed to disappointment, and she soon had good reason to fear that she



"Blinding tears filled her eyes."

had made a grave mistake in confiding to her elder daughter the secret of the fortune that awaited her; for Ethel declined to take any part in the necessary work of the household, though her mother and sister were often quite tired out before the day's duties were over.

"Ethel, you really must help mamma, or she will be ill," remonstrated her sister more than once; but her words made no impression upon Ethel, who considered that she had been deeply injured by their removal from the old home.

"It was due to me that mamma should have made some effort to maintain our proper place in society," she com-

plained; and she was going over the old arguments about this one morning, when the talk between the sisters was interrupted by the arrival of the postman, who brought a letter for Ethel.

"I believe it is from Mr. Sutherland," she said, as she tore open the envelope, and eagerly read the missive. The next minute she was in her mother's room, exclaiming, "Mr. Sutherland has come home from Scotland, and I am to go to the Manor House for a week, to meet some friends of his! What shall I wear, mamma?"

"What do you mean, Ethel? You have plenty of dresses to wear, I am sure."

"Oh, yes, if I were only going to live in a cottage all my life I daresay my clothes would do very well, but at the Manor House I shall be expected to dress differently from what I do at home. I have not a single dress fit to sit down to dinner in."

"My dear, Mr. Sutherland will not expect you to dress for dinner as you suppose. In the first place, you could hardly go into society so soon after dear papa's death, and then another thing, our friend does not care for society himself," remarked Mrs. Maldon.

"But, mamma, he says he wants me to meet some friends, so of course I shall be expected to dress for dinner, and I really must have something more suitable than my heavy crape-trimmed best dress."

"But I cannot afford another new dress for you just yet," said her mother, in a tone of expostulation. "Dorothy and I were going over the expenses yesterday, and we both agreed that we must not spend any more on dress for the rest of this year."

"Oh, yes, of course, I know everything you have looks very nice, and you won't want new things for a long time; but you really would not ruin my prospects for life for the sake of a few shillings, would you?"

"I wish I had never told you what I believed the future held in store for you," said the widow, with a sigh.

"But you have told me, mamma, and I have a right to take care that my prospects shall not be spoiled for the sake of a few shillings," added Ethel; "for a pretty dinner dress could be bought for less than a pound."

"There would be the making," said Mrs. Maldon, beginning to yield the point, as she generally did to Ethel if she were persistent.

"Well, just for this time; but the dressmaker need not be paid at once, and when I come back I will take lessons in dressmaking, so that we can make our own for the future."

"What sort of dress do you want? It must be black, you know."

"Oh, yes, of course. The only colour I should wear would be a bit of scarlet geranium, or some white flowers I might get from the gardener. I should think black lace, or black sprigged net over black silk, would do very nicely," added the young lady.

"Too expensive," said her mother, shortly.

"Not if I had Dorothy's old black silk for a foundation."

"But Dorothy will want her dress by-and-by, if she does not wear it just now," said her mother.

"She will have outgrown it before she can wear it out, her figure is altering so fast now, so that I may just as well use it in this way, and she can have another presently. I will buy her one myself as soon as I am able, and you too, mother—a much better one than that old thing."

"Well, you must ask Dorothy about it first," said her mother, as Ethel was leaving the room, well satisfied with the success of her errand.

But Dorothy was by no means disposed to regard her dress as an "old thing." "I can do it up and make it look very nice by-and-by, and so I can't spare it," she said, decidedly.

"Well, that is being a dog in the manger. You can't wear it now, and by the time you can, your figure will have altered so that it will not fit you."

"But papa gave me that dress, and so I should like to keep it for that reason," said Dorothy, in a still more decided tone. "Come to breakfast now," she added; "I have made the coffee, and Tom is waiting."

"Let him wait," said Ethel, crossly. "I promise you a new silk dress for this old one, and——"

But Tom was heard calling, "Dollie! Dollie! When am I to have my breakfast?" and Dorothy ran into the breakfast-room without waiting to hear what her sister was ready to promise.

"The coffee is first-rate this morning," pronounced Tom, as soon as he had tasted it; "you have managed it at last, Dollie. How is mamma this morning—tired as usual, I suppose? Poor mamma, it is hard for her, I must say."

"But it might be harder, Tom," said his mother, coming in at the same minute, and taking her place at the breakfast-table.

"Yes, and it might be lighter if everybody took their own share of the burden," said Tom, with a look at his elder sister. "I wish I was earning money as well as gaining experience, as old Long talks about so much. As soon as ever I can earn something, you and Dollie shall have a servant to help you with the work."

"Oh, we shall have got so used to it by that time as actually to like it," laughed his younger sister.

"You may, perhaps; but I am sure if Tom could make those mean people pay him something, so that we could keep a servant, I should be very glad," remarked Ethel.

She generally found something to complain of at breakfast-time, and it was a standing grievance with her that her brother could not earn a little money, which would enable them to keep a servant.

Before the rest had finished, Tom was obliged to leave, for he had to walk nearly a mile to his employment. As soon as he was gone, Ethel said—

"I can't wash up the breakfast-things this morning, Dorothy, I want to go and see Miss Cope about making my dress."

"I should not go to Miss Cope," said her mother, "she is the most expensive dressmaker in the town."

"And the most stylish," remarked Ethel.

"That may be; but Miss Linden makes them quite as well, I think; or if you had Miss Black to come in for a day and help you, it would cost still less," said the widow.

"But if you are short of money just now, mamma, it would be better to go to Miss Cope, for she does not mind waiting for her bill, and I could tell her to get what trimmings were wanted, and charge for it altogether."

"But, my dear Ethel, I cannot afford to pay heavy dressmakers' bills," protested Mrs. Maldon.

"Then she must wait until I can pay them myself. Now, mother, about that old frock of Dorothy's. You know what she is when she once makes up her mind to a thing; unless you speak to her, she won't part with it, I know, and I really must have it if I am to go decently dressed to the Manor House, so try and manage it for me while I am out this morning. Can I bring you anything from the draper's while I am there?" she asked, when she went up to put her things on.

She did not suggest that her mother or sister should go with her; indeed, she had decided to go when she knew they would be busy about the housework, that they might not offer to accompany her. "I can't understand Ethel," remarked her sister, when she went out, leaving Dorothy to make their bed and clear up the room.

"She certainly has greatly altered during the last few weeks," said Mrs. Maldon, with a sigh; "but there is some excuse to be made for her. You evidently know what has changed her now, Dorothy, and it is not wonderful, perhaps, that she should feel impatient to enjoy some of the advantages of the wealth she will possess by-and-by, though I sometimes wish I had not told her the secret confided to your dear papa. Did she tell you she was going to spend a week with Mr. Sutherland?"

"I heard her tell you when I came up to wash my hands and change my apron. She asked me for my silk dress, too, but I can't spare it, you know, mamma."

"Oh, my dear, I wish you would, for peace sake. You see, she will be able to buy you a new one by-and-by, and I am confident she will be pleased to help us all she can when she gets this money; she never was a greedy girl, I can say that for her."

"But, mother, to wait and count upon Ethel getting Mr. Sutherland's money is like wishing for him to die," said straightforward Dorothy.

Mrs. Maldon looked shocked. "Pray don't talk like that, my dear," she said, quickly; "I am certain Ethel has no such thought as that in her mind. I feel sure she is growing rather fond of Mr. Sutherland now, though she used to make game of him a little while ago. About the dress, dear. She really does want a dinner dress to take with her to the Manor House; I can see that now, and it would greatly lighten the expense if you would let her have your old black silk for the purpose."

"But what am I to do, mamma, when I want it by-and-by?"

"We must let the future take care of itself. When Ethel becomes a rich woman we shall neither of us want for a silk dress, I daresay."

"Well, if I give it to her it will be for your sake now, mamma, and not for any future silk dresses," said Dorothy, a little disappointed to find her mother taking her sister's part so warmly.

"Very well, dear, give it to her for my sake, for it will save me a good deal of worry if she can get this dress without much outlay of money. You and I, dear, must learn to be as economical as we can, and then if Ethel wants a little extra sometimes, we shall be able to afford it without much difficulty."

Dorothy made no reply to this, but she thought of her cherished silk dress being turned into a foundation for Ethel's finery, and something like a bitter feeling crept into her mind about this secret of her sister's; for it had wrought a disastrous change in Ethel's character, or so it seemed to Dorothy.

"She was always kind and willing to give up anything until she heard about this fortune," she said, when she was helping her mother to make Tom's bed.

"Well, there was nothing much to cross her in the old days," said Mrs. Maldon. "I always thought she was a sweet, unselfish girl, and so perhaps she will be again, when she can have what she considers is her due, but just now things are hard for her."

"Then she cannot be as unselfish as you thought her, mamma," said Dorothy. "The selfishness was just

covered up by her good manners, and because there was nothing to disturb it. Now it is uncovered—very much uncovered," concluded the girl, whose mind still ran on her silk dress, which she had been called upon to sacrifice to her sister's whim.

She took it out of the box, where it had been carefully laid away, before her sister came home, and put it on her mother's bed. "I will give it to you, mamma," she said, "then I shall not mind so much about it," and having thus disposed of it, she tried to put the affair out of her mind.

Ethel returned about dinner-time, tired and cross. "Have you got what you wanted?" asked her mother, noticing that she had brought no parcels home with her.

"One never does get what one wants; but I bought some lace and net at Kemp's, and Miss Cope says it will make up very well on a silk foundation," and as she spoke she glanced at her sister to see whether she had been asked to give up her dress.

But Dorothy had determined to regard the gift as to her mother, and took no notice of her sister's remark.

Mrs. Maldon, however, soon told Ethel that she was to have what she wanted, and in her delight at having gained her point, she went and kissed Dorothy, who was busy getting the dinner ready. "You shall have a new one for it as soon as ever I am able to buy you one," she said, and then she ran back to her mother.

"There is only one thing more I want, mamma," she said, "and that I am sure you will lend me, just for once. I have no brooch fit to wear with my new gown."

"You have two or three jet ones," said Mrs. Maldon, wondering what else she could want.

"Jet?" exclaimed Ethel, in a tone of contempt. "I could not wear those heavy ugly things, but if you would lend me your diamond brooch, mamma, it would just finish off the dress Miss Cope is making—and——"

"Indeed, my dear, such a brooch is not suitable for a young girl like you," interrupted Mrs. Maldon; "and besides, I really could not lend you that, for it was papa's gift to me only a little while before he died, and I treasure it so much now that I should be afraid of wearing it myself."

"What nonsense, mamma! What is the good of having a beautiful brooch like that if you never wear it? It will do it good to have it out; do, mamma, let me take it with me, I will take the greatest possible care of it," she added.

"My dear, it would simply be an added worry to you, and spoil all your pleasure, I am sure. I only wore it just to please papa, and I was thankful to have it off and safe in the case again each time I put it on. By the way, the last time I wore it the pin got broken, and it has never been mended."

"I could soon get a new pin put in, and I will pay for it myself," said Ethel. "Do, mamma, let me have it," she pleaded.

"Well, I must think about it. But I am going down to help Dorothy with the dinner now; she has too much to do, I am afraid, for you never take your fair share of the work now-a-days, dear."

"Well, mamma, why not keep a servant?" said Ethel. "I am sure it would be much more comfortable for everybody, and more becoming, too."

"But, my dear, I cannot afford the expense. You seem to forget how we went into this question before we came here, and you agreed then that we could manage very well if we had a woman once a week."

"But, mamma, how can you expect me to do the same

as though I had no more expectation of living a different life from this than Dorothy has?" demanded Ethel. "I think it is due to me that you should keep a servant, and we might save the money for her wages in some way. Did I tell you I had arranged to take lessons in dress-making when I come home from the Manor House? To learn scientific dressmaking is all the rage, I find, and so I have agreed to take lessons at the same time as Minnie West; it will only cost a guinea," added Ethel, in an indifferent tone.

"But you forget I have no guineas to spare," said Mrs. Maldon.

"Now, mother, we shall save the money over and over again. Minnie is going to learn so as to save the expense of a dressmaker's bill coming in so often, and as I am to visit at the Manor House and meet well-to-do people I shall want more dresses than you and Dorothy, and so it will be very convenient for me to make my own. Besides, I could teach Dorothy how to make hers, and help you with yours. I thought you would think it the best expended guinea you had ever laid out."

"But, my dear, I cannot honestly afford to spend it—at least, not out of this quarter's money—so I think you will have to wait a little for your lessons. Let us go down to dinner now, for Tom will be in directly, and he has no time to wait."

"And you will let me have the brooch to take to the jeweller's after tea? I have promised to go out for a walk with Minnie West, and we might as well take it with us."

"I don't know, my dear; I don't like parting with this brooch even for a little while," said poor Mrs. Maldon. But the tone in which she spoke was almost as pleading as Ethel's had been a minute before, and so she knew well enough that her mother was upon the point of yielding.

"Now, mamma, you need not have the least fear that I shall lose your diamond brooch," said Ethel, an hour or two later. She had followed her mother to her room again, and seated herself near the dressing-table, while her mother brushed her hair. "By-and-by I shall have lots of jewellery, and so I may as well get used to the care of it now. It would be better, perhaps, to take your jewel-case with me to the Manor House to keep the brooch in when I am not wearing it—though, of course, the servants are honest enough, I have no doubt."

"I wish I had never heard the name of the Manor House," said Mrs. Maldon, in a petulant tone. But though she protested and complained of the change in her daughter, she unlocked the little jewel-case that held all her treasures and gave the sparkling brooch into the girl's hand, while she could not help feeling hurt at her selfishness in demanding it.

"If we were not so dreadfully poor, I should be able to buy what I wanted for myself," said Ethel. "Perhaps Mr. Sutherland may ask me to stay at the Manor House for good," she added, "and that would be a great help to you, mamma, and you would be able to keep a servant then to assist you and Dorothy."

But Mrs. Maldon made no reply to this suggestion of Ethel's. She was afraid she would never see her treasured brooch again, and felt vexed with herself that she had not been more firm in her refusal at first.

She was glad Dorothy was going out by-and-by, as she would be able to indulge her feelings more freely when she was in the house by herself. Somehow she shrank from telling her younger daughter about the brooch, for fear she should blame Ethel too severely.

But Dorothy heard about it from Minnie West before she came home, and also another item of news which she did not mention to her mother, but which her brother Tom had also heard on his way home at night.

"So Lady Lofty is going to be Lady of the Manor, I hear," he whispered, as the two stood together in the garden for a few minutes after supper.

"Who told you?" said Dorothy.

"Dick West. He had it from his sister. Old Sutherland wants her to go there for good—as his daughter, in fact, Dick says. What does mamma say about it?"

"I—I don't know," said Dorothy. "I heard the same thing from Minnie. Ethel told her all about it while they were out together, but I have not heard it spoken of at home."

"That's not so wonderful, Dollie. People often go abroad to learn what is going on under their noses at home," concluded Tom, and he hoped the news might be true, for home would be far more comfortable without his elder sister than with her, and he said so.

"Have you heard about mamma's diamond brooch?" asked Dorothy.

"Yes. That was what set us talking," answered Tom. "Dick said she would need a diamond brooch and a good many other things if she were going to be Lady of the Manor."

"I wish mamma had not given her the brooch. It seems to me a pity to let Ethel have everything her own way, as she does now. What will be the end of it, Tom?"

"Oh, she will be Lady of the Manor at all costs, and we shall have to go out in the world and earn our own living," and Tom laughed as he made the suggestion, little dreaming how near the truth his words were likely to prove in the future.

(Continued on page 33.)





L ove and Sacrifice.

LILIAN, sweetheart, I wish such an hour as this could last for ever."

Lilian Kerr makes no answer in words, but, as she bends over the flowers she has gathered in the garden, and arranges the posy whence Frank Milburd has begged one fragrant spray, it is possible the maiden's heart is echoing at this moment her lover's thought. Such times become enshrined in the memory. It is a perfect evening, sweet with the music of birds and the breath of summer flowers; and these two, only a few brief days betrothed, are sitting in the moonlight in the hush and quiet of the resting hour. Both are busy workers—Frank Milburd is engaged at the electrical engineering works in the neighbourhood, and Lilian keeps the old home together by carrying on a "Kindergarten" every morning. Her little day-scholars do wonderful things in the way of action-songs, brick-building, clay-modelling, and the like, and the classes are so popular in Hillcroft that the young teacher's earnings have for a long time now stood between her widowed mother and need.

Soon after the father's death, the Kerrs were left almost penniless by a bank failure. The mother toiled hard in every possible way for the education of her girls, and Lilian was taken into a public orphanage, where she received an excellent training up to the age of sixteen. Now she is her mother's stay and comfort and right hand, for Mrs.

Kerr is in feeble health, and her two other daughters live far away in London—one is married to a schoolmaster in the northern suburbs, and the other is a resident assistant at a West End library. Both are just now home on a short visit, and greatly interested in the young couple ensconced in seclusion this evening behind the curtain.

"It is the best thing that could have happened in every way," is their decision respecting the engagement. "Frank is sure to rise, step by step, at the works, and he and Lilian will take care of mother amid the old surroundings. Had Lilian become engaged to anyone at a distance, it might have meant transplanting mother to some new neighbourhood, which would have been a sore trouble to her, now she is so weak and getting on in years."

Even dreamy, lovelit, never-to-be-forgotten hours cannot last for ever. Kate and Annie ere long turn their thoughts to supper, their appetites sharpened by the country air; and Lilian is fain to leave her retreat, though far more inclined towards moonlight and flowers just now, than towards cherry-tart, custard, and loaf-cake.

That summer seems to pass away all too quickly; the winter comes, and with it the first great trial Lilian has known, for she was too young to grieve bitterly when she became fatherless. Frank Milburd, who is well thought of at the works, is offered a post in Canada at increased salary, and he accepts it at once, delighted at having so soon gained a better position. With the ardour and impulsiveness of youth

he presses for immediate marriage, never doubting for an instant that Lilian will accompany him abroad. He pictures their happy home together, and offers to make Mrs. Kerr an allowance, or to take her with them; but poor Lilian shakes her head.

"Dear Frank, I cannot—must not come," she says, with trembling lips. "Mother is quite unfit for a voyage, and it would break her heart if I left her. It would distress her to go to Kate's home in London, and Annie could not take her, of course. I must not leave her, Frank, indeed. Think what a hard, struggling life hers has been! Her last years *ought* to be cloudless and restful. I will come to you at last, dear, dear Frank, if God will; but for mother's sake I must not leave the old home yet."

Frank Milburd is at first inclined to consider himself wronged and slighted, and there are not wanting advisers to tell Lilian she is acting foolishly, for her lover will probably soon console himself with someone else abroad. Even Mrs. Kerr pleads with Lilian to go, saying she will manage with the help of her neighbours; but Lilian refuses to forsake her, and in his heart Frank honours her for her filial love.

Life goes quietly on at Garden Cottage after his departure. Hillcroft seems changed to Lilian, who looks out with unspeakable yearning for the letters that at first come regularly, but by-and-by at rarer intervals. How different have been her visions from this lonely reality! She has pictured Frank as making one in the dear old home, coming to its comfort and brightness from his bachelor lodgings in the village. Now their marriage is indefinitely deferred, and he—through long, lonely years he may resent her unkindness towards him, or it may be that, as the neighbours say, he will yet seek his freedom from the engagement.

Poor Lilian! all she can do is to cry to the "Over-Heart" Eternal, the Love that above and around us lives and pities, and comprehends our every burden. Lilian can put all her spirit-perplexities into the prayers she outpours at the Mercy-seat, and, praying, she gathers strength for daily tasks, and for the care and cheering of her mother.

One spring, more than a year after Frank's departure, Lilian is specially anxious; for six weeks no letter has come from abroad, and his silence bewilders her. The poor girl comforts herself with the fancy that he will manage so that a letter shall reach her on *Valentine's Day*; did he not *first* hint at his love for her by sending her a bunch of snowdrops on Valentine's morning, two years ago? He may have sent a long letter enclosed to friends, asking them to post it to her on the 13th of February. So she lives in hope, telling herself that on the 14th she will surely hear.

Valentine's Day comes round, chill as mid-winter, dreary with snowstorm and sighing, gusty wind. Garden Cottage is silent to-day as concerns the children's songs, for no little feet can manage the walk through the snow; and, as the hours go on, and no letter or message finds its way to the expectant, longing Lilian, she comforts herself with the thought that Frank, doubtless, has written; it must be the snow that delays or prevents the postman's call. Late in the afternoon, with heart beating so quickly that she is faint with hope and suspense, she rushes to answer the well-known "rat-tat." Alas! the postman has brought only a circular as to coal and coke, an appeal from a charitable society, and a bright letter from Annie at the library, reporting promotion and an increase of salary.

Somehow, these communications irritate Lilian, whose nerves are weakened with long anxiety. "It is all very well for Annie to write so cheerfully," she reflects. "Is she going to spare any of her money for mother, I wonder, or is it all to be hoarded up as usual? Annie can save much more than I ever can. Why should I have to use so much, just to keep the home together? And fancy, hurrying to the letter-box just to get this coal and coke thing; and as for these people who want money for the poor, I'm poor *myself*, and I *work* hard, too, which I dare say the people they help never do!"

Better thoughts than these come to the heart of Lilian ere long, as she is kneeling upstairs by her bed, and weeping tears of sorrow and disappointment at His feet Who understands the heartache and the burden of His child. Has she not prayed "*Thy will be done*," and can she not accept that will, even though it mean hope deferred, or for ever put aside? Is not all *best* that is good in the Father's sight? Can she not trust Him, though the shadows linger long?

"I ought to rejoice with those who are glad," she thinks, contritely. "I will read Annie's letter to mother at once; how it will cheer her up! and whatever my God in His love withhold, I *have* money to give Him, and I *will* give it. I will send the Soup and Clothing Fund a subscription signed '*Thankoffering*,' it shall be a token in *His* sight that I thank and bless Him with all my heart. I can trust Him utterly still."

Mrs. Kerr is gladdened indeed by the letter Lilian reads to her, and she dictates a long, loving reply, whereto Lilian adds tender congratulations of her own. The girl then goes to her money-box and transfers some of its contents to an envelope addressed to the Benevolent Society. To-morrow, when the storm abates, she will drop that envelope in the collecting-box outside their office in High Street. There is sunshine in her heart as she spends time and thought in helping to make the lives of others happy, and she goes singing to open the door when just at tea-time she hears a ring of the bell, which she connects with the groceries that have been ordered from the village.

A tall form, wrapped in a snow-whitened macintosh, steps into the hall, and Frank Milburd shakes himself free from his wraps.

"*Frank!*" gasps Lilian, "it—it *cannot* be you!"

"Then it is my *ghost*, my dearest; and now I come to look at you, it is *you* who are pale and ghost-like! What has my Lilian done with her roses? I have travelled fast, my darling, to reach you on Valentine's Day, if possible—there, mother knows my voice, if *you* don't. She is calling my name. Here I am, mother dear, and I'm at Hillcroft for *good* this time. If you'll make room for me this spring I mean to inflict myself permanently upon you. My junior, whose friends are in Ontario, has gladly taken my place abroad; and I have been summoned back as sub-manager, instead of Wheeler, who has started for himself in London. Well, Lilian, have you no word of welcome? Never mind, my dearest, it is welcome enough to hold you in my arms again."

Snow without, but summer within! Was ever a meal so crowned with thanksgiving and hope as that tea at Garden Cottage? Was ever a heart so filled with praise as that of Lilian, who steals away by-and-by to the room of weeping, and falters upon her knees: "*What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?*"

M. S. HAYCRAFT.

HINTS ON HOME TEACHING.



It is an open question whether home or school teaching is to be preferred, but in the greater number of cases home teaching is preparatory work, carried on for a longer or shorter time, and having in view some future period of school life. This fact must be remembered and must influence both the aim and the scope of the home-teacher.

To the first stages of education necessarily belong the formation of habits of study, of punctuality, order and method, the cultivation of the memory, and a thorough grounding in elementary subjects. "The drudgery of education" this has been called, but upon it depends in great measure the value of all subsequent study.

It must, in many respects, be less interesting to children to study at home than at school. They miss the companionship of their contemporaries and the stimulus of competition. The teacher's aim, therefore, should be to compensate for this by variety and brightness in the lessons. Even the most rudimentary subjects can be taught in an interesting manner, but no greater mistake can be made than to think they need neither preparation nor previous thought.

Before beginning to teach any subject, the children's interest should be aroused by conversations and stories illustrating its utility. Children are very utilitarian, and they will learn much more rapidly if they can see any practical end to be gained by their exertions. Reading seldom requires any stimulus; the desire to be able to read for themselves the stories and poems they have heard will be sufficient to spur on the dullest of children. Much more than is usually attempted might be done towards teaching children to read aloud well. It is one of the subjects learned best at home. The standard of reading in most schools is so lamentably low that any child who attempts to read with taste or style runs the risk of being ridiculed by his schoolfellows—a quite sufficient risk to make a sensitive child cease the effort. Bad reading is more contagious than good, and in class each pupil has to listen to the poor reading of his class-mates, being not a little influenced thereby. Books written in one syllable should rather be avoided in teaching a child to read; they must necessarily be written in tortuous or inexact English, and are apt to influence the child's composition. Drawling or jerky reading usually comes from reading what is not understood or of no interest. For some time after the first lessons are given it is a wise plan to first read aloud to the pupil the passage to be read. He may at times be tempted to trust his memory rather than his eyes, yet this danger is slight compared with his falling into an artificial monotone or stumbling over a misunderstood passage.

One of the greatest advantages of home-teaching is that both dull and clever can be considered, and the teaching correspondingly adjusted. If it be seen that a difficult point in any study has been approached, and that the child is manifesting a great interest in the subject, it is wisest to take advantage of this interest and, by giving extra time to the study, tide over the knotty point. Or perhaps a child is getting dispirited concerning a subject in which he seems to make no headway, and his failure is making him careless in his way of doing his work; it is as well then to leave the study for a time, being careful, however, that the child does not feel it is given up through any failure on his part. On taking up the study again, if the first few lessons be made

interesting and simple, the child's distaste and discouragement may be overcome.

First lessons are for the most part more like play than work. Many children learn their alphabet and little methods of adding and subtracting from their toys. The teacher must decide when "work" shall first be mentioned and the child understand that he has definite tasks to perform which are not of the character of "play." However important it is to make children's lessons enjoyable by using methods most likely to please them, if training is to be wholesome there must be in it a place for tasks as tasks. President Porter, of Yale, said, in substance, that one of the chief advantages of a college curriculum is, that it trains a young man "to do what he ought to do, when he ought to do it, whether he wants to do it or not." In some cases it is advantageous to delay this point in a child's education; progress is rapid so long as learning remains a pleasure and a privilege, and nothing should check the acquirement of a love for learning.

Dr. Abbott, a noted authority on matters of education, recommends that a child's studies begin between the ages of six and seven. To children living in the country, with free access to nature, he would give fewer and shorter lessons than to those living in town with less to occupy them. The town child may begin French and Latin at the age of seven; Latin rather to fill up time than because so early a commencement is absolutely essential. "At seven years of age," he says, "a child is not old enough to study history with any advantage; geography, if acquired so young, will not be found to remain with him; arithmetic, French, and English are not sufficient to occupy the time."

Some history, however, may be taught a child, and though rudimentary, forms a basis for after study: if sympathetically imparted, it will arouse a proper interest in the child's mind. The "biographical method" of teaching history, though decidedly the most trying to the teacher, has often been found very successful with young children. To take some prominent character, to place him in his proper environment, and give him the home and life he would most likely have had, will do more to impress children with the reality of history than twice the time spent in reading chapters of a written volume.

Memory tasks—poems and passages learned by heart—form a less prominent feature of education to-day than they once did. Our ancestors fell into the error of over-learning by rote; we are inclined to neglect the subject altogether. Home-teaching should embrace those lessons which test and strengthen the memory, for at home, more easily than at school, discretion can be used as to the time and manner in which they are to be learnt. Memory tasks should be set when the child is fresh and untired, and they should contain no difficulties of subject or pronunciation; all words likely to prove stumbling-blocks should be carefully explained.

In some children memory appears much weaker than in others, and some seem to have scarcely any power of learning by heart. In many cases this deficiency is not natural, nor is it likely, if taken in time, to prove permanent. A defective memory may really be a spoilt or untrained memory. It should be the teacher's aim to strengthen it, and this may be done by instilling a habit of attention—of doing one thing at a time, and by cultivating the faculties of imagination and association, so that the child may readily call up images of things he hears described, and afterwards recall thoughts by associating them with these mental pictures.

ISABEL SUART ROBSON.

"OH! THOSE CHILDREN!"

"If King David had been a woman he would never have said, 'Happy is the man that hath his quiver full.'"

These were the words I overheard one day, and they set me thinking seriously. Are children a nuisance, then? Very often. Are they a trouble? Always. Are they a responsibility? Yes, very great. Are they a blessing? That depends on how you bring them up.

Now, the proper answer to all these questions should be two negatives and two affirmatives, and it depends chiefly upon us mothers whether our children are nuisances or blessings.

To begin with, the sooner we get this fact firmly fixed in our minds the better: Children are a sacred responsibility. God sends them to us, and to God we shall have to give an account of what we have done for and with them.

not to marry, so that they may not incur that responsibility. Not at all. Shall we be cowards when God calls us to fight for Him? Shall we be sluggards when He urges us to work for Him? Because a thing is difficult, shall we give it up, without even trying to accomplish it? Surely not.

To those among my readers who are not yet married, I would say: Do not rush heedlessly into matrimony.

People marry hastily, especially among what are called the lower classes. A girl gives up a good place, where she has been earning enough money to dress herself nicely, and has had the best of food and the nicest of house accommodation, to join her lot to that of the young man of her choice. All this is right and natural; but does she stop to weigh the cost? Does she remember that her husband



"Happy Faces."

When a child comes into the world, it is, as it were, a lump of clay. The parents are the potters, and it rests with them whether the clay shall be moulded into a beautiful vessel, fit for the Master's use, or whether it shall be an ugly one, so marred by bad tempers and evil habits that it is fit for no one. This is a solemn thought, and when young people marry they would do well to consider what an awful responsibility it is to have children. That word *awful* is used too much nowadays, but there are many things to which it may rightly be applied. Sin was ever and will be always *awful*. God's wrath was ever and will be always *awful*, and the thought that we have power to make or mar the character of our children must always be an *awful* one for those parents who believe that God hates sin, and will punish it.

Then, perhaps you will say, it would be better for people

will be unable to provide her with exactly the same kind of board and lodging to which she has been accustomed? Does she realise that there will probably be little ones to care for, and train for time and eternity? If so, then the marriage will probably be a happy one, and the children when they come will be welcomed, and grow up into the blessings that King David thought they ought to be.

If, on the other hand, she has thought of and cared for nothing but escaping from the restraints of service, and getting a home of her own, she will probably make herself and her husband miserable, and her children will be the perpetual nuisance that only badly managed children can be.

Now, we will suppose that we are all married, and the children are coming one by one. What shall we do with them to make them a comfort and help to us?



"When the boats come home from sea,
With their silver store,

Well their crews may joyous be,
That their toil is o'er."

p. 26.

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First of all, we must begin at the very beginning. Some folks have a crazy sort of idea that you can let children do just as they please for the first three or four years of their lives, and then make them everything that is sweet and good for the rest. You might just as well put together all the ingredients for a plum pudding, and then fret because it hadn't turned into a custard when it came to table.

With our children, as with everything else in our lives, what a man sows that shall he reap. We must put good seed into the little hearts; we must teach them from the first to be obedient, gentle, patient, and persevering. These are virtues which can grow in the youngest children, and as they get older there will be more to teach but nothing to unlearn.

Ask any good master what he most dreads in a new pupil, and he will tell you the bad tricks acquired through careless teaching, which have all to be got rid of before he can teach the right way. Don't let us from mere idleness allow our children to drift into evil habits.

In the management of children we must try specially to be consistent. We are tired, perhaps, and so for peace sake we allow them to do things which they and we know to be wrong. Then on some other occasion, when we are not so weary or so busy, we suddenly pounce upon them, and exclaim, "What do you mean by doing that, you tiresome children?" If we allow one thing to-day and another to-morrow, and the day after declare that they are both wrong, it will be little wonder if our children are disobedient.

Let us try to be patient with our children. The perpetual questions, the continual movement, the unceasing noise—all these try the nerves of women who are not strong, just as much as they try the temper of women who are up to their eyes in work, and know that if they could only put the youngsters into a separate room, they would do more in one hour than they can get through in two with them at their elbows. So with all mothers there is a daily need of patience. Patience to restrain the hasty blow or the angry word. How can we get that patience? Of course, as we all agree, there is but one sure way of gaining every virtue, and that

is through earnest prayer. But there is an old saying which tells a man in danger to put his trust in God and—keep his powder dry. God helps those who help themselves, and it will be little good praying to be patient if we don't keep our powder dry—that is to say, use all the means we know of to help us to exercise the virtue. Here's a splendid thought the next time you feel right down cross with a tiresome child, "When I was a child, did I behave like that?"

Human nature is much the same everywhere and in every age, and you and I, as children, probably gave our parents just as much trouble as our own little one gives us; and happy is the woman who, thinking seriously over her past life, does not feel bound to add, "I believe I gave them *more*."

Be firm. Don't worry your children with needless or tiresome rules, but let it be understood that when mother says a thing she means it, and no amount of persistency on their part will alter your determination. Threats of punishment, and promises of reward should, therefore, be very carefully made, and having been made, they should be kept.

Be sympathetic. The troubles, the doubts, the fears, the nameless trifles which operate in a child's mind, and make him what we call naughty, are no trifles to him. Let him feel from the very first that he can bring them all to mother and be sure of her sympathising, that is, *feeling with* him; and never fear that when he is older he will forget or neglect the friend of his early days.

More of the friend and less of the parent, that is the best recipe for gaining our children's love and confidence; and their bright eyes and happy faces will be a rich recompense for all our efforts on their behalf.

It may be a difficult task to train ourselves to treat our children as they ought to be treated, and sometimes we may be inclined to doubt whether it is worth the trouble. If you ever feel like that, my friends, look beyond. Think of the rest in Heaven, which we all hope to gain some day. What would you say if your children were not there to greet you?

E. M. WATERWORTH.

WHEN THE BOATS COME HOME FROM SEA.



WHEN the boats come home from sea,
With their silver store,
Well their crews may joyous be,
That their toil is o'er.

On the beach the children shout,
'Mid the busy crowd;
Wives run in and wives run out,
Giving thanks aloud.

Here a ringing laugh is heard,
There a merry jest;
Every lass has got a word
For the lad loved best.

Grey old sea-dogs grimly smile,
Hearing each blithe tongue,
Thinking it a *long*, LONG while
Since themselves were young.

Gaily sings the busy throng;
Each one lends a hand;
Bear the glittering spoil along,
Bring it safe to land!

Sing and work, and work and sing,
'Tis as it should be,
When the boats with brown sails bring
Our men home from sea.

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.



WHY DO OUR CHILDREN'S TEETH DECAY?



F the fact implied in this question there is, unfortunately, no doubt. The teeth of the children of to-day decay very sadly, and we hear of children crying with toothache who ought to know nothing of such a pain. All the causes of this defect are too complicated and serious to be dismissed in a few lines.

To a large extent, however, they originate with the mother, while the prevention and cure of the trouble are also in her hands:

When children's teeth decay early, it is frequently the case that the mischief began before they were born. Mothers who do not take care of their own teeth can scarcely expect that the teeth of their little ones will be strong and beautiful. Yet it is quite a usual thing for the expectation of a baby to be accompanied by trouble with the mother's teeth, and there are many mothers who are obliged to make a visit to the dentist one of their first trips from home after confinement.

The cure for this sort of thing is that *betimes* mothers should give proper care and attention to the children's teeth, and their own as well. The most effectual way of doing this is to eat proper food, and see that the children get proper food—food, that is, that makes bone. Teeth always decay when they are not well nourished. The foods we need are oatmeal porridge, milk, eggs, lean meat, peas, beans, vegetables, fruit, and similar articles. If we trusted more to these things, and were less devoted to superfine flour and dainty dishes, we should not suffer with our teeth as we do. Oatmeal is particularly valuable for strengthening the teeth. Professor Parkes, a gentleman to whom we are indebted for most important discoveries about food, in his book on "The Personal Care of Health," says: "Oatmeal is the most nutritious of the cereal grains, and formerly the staple food of our finest men." Children accustomed to make their breakfast of oatmeal porridge are much less likely to have trouble with their teeth than are children who breakfast on tea and bread-and-butter, especially when the bread is made of fine white flour.

Cleanliness of the teeth is a great preservative, both in children and grown-up people. Little particles of food allowed to lodge in the teeth quickly decompose and cause decay. From the earliest childhood mothers should train their little ones to use a toothbrush morning and evening. Those to whom the use of a toothbrush is habitual are uncomfortable if they cannot get one; those who do not begin to use a brush until the second teeth are established have to make an effort to remember it.

DRESS THE BABIES PLAINLY.

Mothers with a nursery full of children, a house to keep in order, and perhaps only one servant to help with the work, are too often made unhappy because their little ones are not dressed as handsomely as they would like, and they fancy it is their duty to stitch, stitch, stitch in the evening, when they should be resting and reading, in order to run a few tucks in Mary's frock, or add a little embroidery to baby's cloak.

Before the mothers weary themselves out with work of this kind, how much we wish they would stop and ask

themselves whether what they are doing is worth while. Give the children plenty of soft flannels and comfortable garments by all means, for without a question the children must be dressed so as to be warm, clean, and comfortable. Yet tucks and embroidery do not help these conditions at all. They only cost money, and cause washing and work. To make them takes time, even when there is a sewing machine in the house; for the possession of a sewing machine tempts many a woman to go over miles of tucks that she would never venture on without it. A happy, healthy, clean baby is in itself so beautiful an object, so unspeakably precious, such a joy and comfort and delight, that no amount of tucks can make it more lovely than it is. Far better it is for the baby that mother should be bright, cheery, and not over-fatigued, and far better for the household that she should be able to think and plan for the general good than that she should be tired out with extra sewing. Mothers who agree with this might learn the following verses. They appeared some years ago in a transatlantic magazine, and are the work of an unknown author:—

"Would you know the baby's skies?

Baby's skies are mother's eyes.

Mother's eyes and smiles together

Make the baby's pleasant weather.

"Mother! keep your eyes from tears,

Keep your heart from foolish fears,

Keep your lips from dull complaining,

Lest the baby think it's raining."

GOOD TEMPER.

What a wonderful thing it is that we should spend time, money, and labour upon making our homes attractive, bright, and pretty—should polish our furniture, and set our ornaments in array, and yet be so often careless about keeping our tempers, and making the most of our patience and forbearance! A great divine once said, "Depend upon it, good temper is the most valuable thing a man can send home, or keep at home. There is not myrrh and aloes and chloride of lime enough in the world to disinfect a single home of the nuisance of having in it a single person of a sour, sullen temper." If, however, good temper is to prevail in the home, parents must not simply exhort their children to be kind to each other, they must set an example of good temper—bear and forbear, and, above all, never disagree before the children. In this, as in every other matter, "example is better than precept." The advice once given to a certain couple is worth remembering: "Never quarrel before the children, but wait till they have gone to bed. Then they will not see and hear you—and perhaps by that time you will not want to quarrel."

CAUTION WITH REGARD TO DAMP BEDS.

When bedrooms are unoccupied, beds should not be left made up. If they are they will be liable to become damp, or moths may get into them. The counterpanes and blankets should be folded and laid aside; the mattress should be turned over and doubled at one end, and the bed placed at the other. Everything should be turned once a week.

If there is any fear that a bed which is to be slept in is likely to be damp, in order to make sure of its condition put a bright looking-glass between the sheets, and cover it up. In a few minutes examine it. If the surface is dimmed there is cause for uneasiness. Should a looking-

glass not be at hand, a tumbler warmed and turned upside down between the sheets will answer the same purpose.

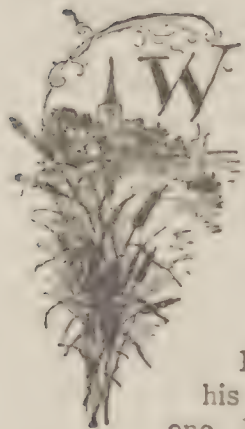
A HOMELY DISH.

In the winter season a homely and economical, but very tasty and nourishing dish may be made with pork and beans. Soak a quart of haricot beans overnight. In the morning pick out the bad beans, and cover the rest with cold water, and set them to boil. When the skins crack a little, take them off the fire, put them into a baking jar, cover them with the water in which they were boiled, and add a tablespoonful

of treacle and half a pound of pickled pork, the rind of which has been deeply scored. Press the pork into the beans and bake gently, not less than five hours. It may be necessary to add more water. The beans should be moist, but not watery, and each bean should be distinct. Those who object to pork might substitute for it two tablespoonfuls of dripping or butter, and add a little salt. When pork is used care must be taken that it is not over-salt. This is a distinctively old-fashioned New England dish. When well made it is very excellent, and can be warmed up again and again.

A MOTHER'S TREASURES.

BY A. STUART FLETCHER.



WHEN John Goode, carpenter, invested the savings of many years in buying a plot of ground by the river, and building two cottages thereon, he called it "Pleasant Place." And a pleasant place it still looked on these bright days of early spring, when the clear water reflected the blue sky and the new golden leaves of the pollard willows that fringed the stream.

But John Goode had died long since, and his two sons now owned the cottages. In one, John Goode the younger still lived, but his brother had recently gone away and let the second house to a man from another village, Will Horrocks by name. Then, to the envy and admiration of the village housewives, No. 2, Pleasant Place, had acquired a new coat of green paint on its door and shutters, its wall was fresh whitewashed, and its windows hung with smart lace curtains, looped up with bows of blue ribbon.

"Well really, John," said Phœbe Goode, standing one evening on the little wooden stage by the river, where her husband had come to help her carry in the supply of water for next day, "really it do make our house look quite shabby! I feel most ashamed of it."

"Our house is as clean as a new pin, I'll say that for thee, Phœbe," said John, who was well content with his home and wife, "and to my mind it's a deal pleasanter to see the youngsters' faces at the window when I come home from work, than all those fine curtains;" and he lifted the two pails and carried them into the house.

Phœbe sat down on a willow stump and looked at the renovated cottage. She had had a hard day, for with four little ones as well as John and herself to mend and make for, her cooking and cleaning to do, and the pig and chickens to feed, she had little time for leisure. But, until Susan Horrocks had come to Pleasant Place, she had scarcely thought of her hard work and had been contented and happy.

The Horrockses had no children. Will earned good wages, and his wife spent them in fine clothes and unnecessary furniture. Of course, she was not happy until she had exhibited all her finery to Phœbe, who, like many another, had a taste for bright colours, and horsehair, and mahogany, and used to come back from these exhibitions discontented with her own sober, well-worn attire, and plainly furnished cottage.

Phœbe looked at the foolish blue bows on Susan's curtains half enviously, never seeing how much more suitable and pleasing her own spotless short blinds looked.

"It's all very well for Susan Horrocks to have such fine things, and to sit with her hands folded in her lap at three in the afternoon," she said, crossly. "I wonder how she would like four little 'uns to toil and moil for?"

"Mammy, mammy."

A little silvery voice rang out from her own cottage door, and the frown cleared from Phœbe's brow as she looked at the curly golden head nestling against John's shoulder.

"This naughty girl wants to see the pretty river before she goes to bed," said John, lovingly.

The little one stretched her arms out towards Phœbe.

"Bessie see pretty river, mammy," she said coaxingly.

"I'll take her down, John. There's another pail to fetch. You sit down, you'll be main tired, I know. Now, Bessie, take mammy's hand."

"Bessie see pretty river," the child said in her silvery voice, contentedly. But, alas, there was a pathetic misuse in the word "see," to which the parents had become accustomed. The child's eyes were sightless; John's golden-haired darling had been born blind.

Nothing gave so much pleasure to little Bessie as the river. There was a music in its gentle ripple to the keen young ears; she would laugh with delight as the water rushed between her dimpled fingers or laved her small pink feet. But where Bessie was concerned, the water was a source of great anxiety to Phœbe and John, and the child was forbidden to go near the stream alone.

"Now, mother's pet, say good night to the pretty water," said Phœbe, holding the little shoulder as the child leaned forward over the stream; then turning homewards with the soft hand clasped in hers, even the sight of Mrs. Horrocks's curtains had no power to arouse her envy.

But this better frame of mind did not last. There was a week when the boys were unusually troublesome, when Jem fell from a tree and split the knees of his new trousers, that took all one evening to mend, and John's stockings had specially large holes; when washing-day was wet and Ted tumbled into the stream with the basketful of mangling, and when even Bessie seemed possessed by a spirit of mischief and kept her mother perpetually on the alert to look after her.

Then, who should come in but Susan Horrocks, with a fine new bonnet from town.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Goode. You'll be going to the young squire's coming of age, I suppose? There will be grand doings, I hear. I said to Will, 'I can't go in my old bonnet,' I says, 'for I've worn it at church till it's quite common.' So I've been to town and bought something real stylish."

Phœbe looked admiringly at the pile of lace and artificial flowers which Susan now put on.

"Is that the fashion?" she asked. "It's a bit high, isn't it?"

"Oh dear no! Nobody wears them low crowns, now, like yours; they've been gone out a year or more!"

"Well, it doesn't much matter," said Phœbe, turning to the oven, where the bread was baking, "for I don't suppose I shall go. How can I, with the children?"

"Not go!" exclaimed Susan, pausing, as she returned the bonnet to its paper bag. "Really, Mrs. Goode, you ought! You make yourself quite a slave to those children; I wouldn't do it, not I!"

"And I won't," said Phœbe, crossly, as the door closed behind her neighbour. "Why shouldn't I have a bit of pleasure sometimes? I'll get cousin Jane to mind the children; she's awful sharp with them, but it's only for once. I must see if I can't do up my bonnet a bit. I can't go with that low crown, after Mrs. Horrocks's."

When John came in rather later than usual that evening, he found Phœbe sitting with flushed face over her old bonnet, trying to pile up bits of ironed ribbon and lace into some semblance of Susan Horrocks's smart-looking bows.

"There, John, I've clean forgot your supper," she said, impatiently; "and do what I will, it won't look like hers!"

John sat down wearily in his chair, while Phœbe began to bustle about, laying the cloth.

"Where's the little 'un?" he said.

"Where's Bess? Why, she's—*where* is she?" A sudden recollection came over her that she had not seen Bessie since Susan's visit, and with a wild terror she flung open the door, and ran down to the river.

"Bessie! come, Bess!" she called, but no one answered. "Oh, what have I done? I've been so full of that bonnet that I haven't thought of the little 'un for hours."



"The child leaned forward over the stream."

p. 28.

"A lantern, quick!" said John; then up and down they searched the tangled river paths, John calling Bessie until he was hoarse.

"She's not here," said a neighbour who had joined them; "you must try the miller's pool."

Phœbe could see John's face blanch, for the miller's pool was in a kind of back-water of the river, deep, dark, silent, and forbidding.

The moon shone out as they reached it; it showed to the searchers' eyes a smooth, black surface, broken only by a clump of arrow-heads.

"What is that?" cried the neighbour, and seizing a willow-twigg, he lifted off from the water-plants a child's little shoe!

* * * * *

But where was Bessie? When Mrs. Horrocks, whom

the child instinctively disliked, had come in, she crept out of doors, and hearing no mother's voice call her back, wandered down to the river. Charmed by its murmuring sound, she forgot everything, and pushed her way through the tangled willows and among the tall rushes to the miller's pool.

Here it was so still—no sound but the splash of a water-rat as he swam from the bank, and a rustle in the bushes as a bird started just above the child's head.

"Pretty! pretty!" said the little one. Then there was a cry of terror, for the tiny foot had slipped, and Bessie was struggling with the black water.

The child's cry was heard by a farmer riding by the pool on the further side. Jumping from his horse, and seizing the branch of a willow, he reached out, caught the little frock, and drew the child to land.

"Whose bairn is it?" he said, wrapping the trembling child in his great-coat. "There are no houses near. I'd best ride home to the missis, and she'll put it in hot blankets, and maybe some of the men 'll know it."

But no one could identify the child till morning, when, leaving her sleeping quietly in the old farmhouse cradle, the farmer rode off to the next village with inquiries.

It had been a terrible night for John and Phœbe. The poor mother wept and rocked herself wildly, pouring out torrents of bitter self-reproach, then prayers for forgiveness and comfort; while the men prepared to drag the pool as soon as it was daylight.

Phœbe could not believe the good news which Farmer Strong brought, until, kneeling by the old cradle in the farmhouse kitchen, she once more pressed her darling to her heart.

"Aye, what would I give for such a one!" said Mrs. Strong, with tears in her eyes; "mine all lie in the church-yard yonder."

"So long as God in His great mercy leaves me my treasures, I'll bear hard work and hard fare cheerfully," said Phœbe, as with the golden head safely wrapped in her shawl again, she made her way home.

And from that day the sight of Susan Horrocks's fine clothes and grand furniture only made Phœbe think of John's honest face or the boys' chubby features; and when work was heavy and even food none too plentiful, she would look at blind Bessie's golden head and murmur thankfully, "Mother's treasure."

DON'T!

A WORD TO MOTHERS.

"DON'T!" is the title of a modern book of etiquette, every one of its many hundred rules beginning with that word, as if, taking the innate perversity of the human mind for granted, the only fit form of instruction were a warning. Half an hour spent in the average nursery may well confirm this opinion; for not only nurses and governesses, but very many mothers, in watching the little ones make trial of their new powers, seem chiefly anxious to tell them, with more or less harshness, how *not* to do it.

This is very discouraging. Over-warning defeats itself; while Encouragement, like the wings on the Shoes of Swift, ever helps forward to success.

Wisely used, however, the word "Don't" has the greatest value. Imagine for a moment a country where nobody said, "Don't." If people could live in it at all, it would be a country full of lamentation and woe; for the children would be for the most part helpless cripples, hideously wounded and scarred, living lives of pain and misery; funerals would be continually in the streets, and little empty chairs would be in every home. Mothers can best imagine the horror of seeing their little ones in constant danger, and being unable to utter the familiar warning. The kettle singing on the hob; the glittering knives upon the table; the steep stairs—all the familiar things of home life would become objects of terror, if the little restless hands might snatch, and the unsure feet might toddle where they pleased, uncontrolled by any cry of "Don't!"

Of course, children are not always obedient to the warning—they wish to try for themselves, and in some instances it is well that they should do so. In cases of great danger—danger to life or limb—obedience *must* be enforced; but when the results of disobedience would only serve as a wholesome reminder, things may be allowed to take their natural course. Herbert Spencer deals with this subject in his valuable little treatise on "Education." After telling of a child who was allowed by his mother to hurt himself slightly, while playing a game against which she had carefully warned him, he says: "What are the results?"

In the first place, he has gained an experience which he must gain eventually, and which, for his own safety, he cannot gain too soon. And in the second place, he has found that his mother's disapproval or warning was meant for his welfare; he has a further positive experience of her benevolence; a further reason for placing confidence in her judgment and kindness; a further reason for loving her."

A day or two after reading this passage for the first time, the present writer had an opportunity of testing its wisdom. A little boy was in the kitchen, watching the process of cooking. Placing a hot pan in the fender, the cook said, "Don't touch it, dear, it is hot; it will burn you." Now this little boy had had some experience of burns, for he had once scalded himself badly with a kettle of water; but since that time he had associated all heat with steam, so he did not believe the warning. Seeing him hovering near the spot, the cook said again: "Don't touch it—it will burn you." But no sooner had she turned her back than the little unbeliever laid the palm of his hand lightly on the pan. Then the truth was forced upon him sharply and suddenly, and he began to prepare his face for an outcry of indignation; but the cook said, "Don't cry, dear, I told you what would happen;" and as the pain was only slight, the child controlled himself, and showed by a look of quick intelligence that he had learnt his lesson.

While recognising the value of warning, it must be borne in mind that the constant, and, above all, the needless use of the word "Don't" weakens its force. Every time the warning is used without sufficient reason, the child "trying for himself" loses confidence in the one who uses it. Children are always ready to think, "This is such a little thing," and if when they try for themselves the consequences are severe, they are compelled to see their own mistake; but if, on the contrary, there follow no unpleasant consequences at all, they can only be confirmed in believing our warning to be worthless.

Two abuses of the word "Don't" may be mentioned as

especially unwise and objectionable, namely, *Don't ask questions*, and *Don't fidget*. Obedience to these two commands is almost impossible, and, if possible, it means that for a time, at least, the sights and sounds around the child are meaningless, and his education is at a standstill; and it is not unlikely that attempts to force unwelcome knowledge upon him will be met with sullen discontent.

All who have dealt successfully with children have discovered three indispensable requisites—imagination, sympathy, and patience. Imagination, because without it no adult, no mother or nurse can put herself in the place of a child; sympathy, because without this fellow-feeling it is impossible to be just; and patience, because only the ability to bear constant demands upon time and attention can guarantee a wise use of the word “Don’t.”

A certain old grandmother, known to the writer of this article, once had her small grand-daughter to stay with her; and while the old lady took her afternoon nap, the busy little maiden laid the table for tea. But when the meal was ready, her only reward was in the sharp words: “What a racket you have been making, child!” The little girl was disappointed and sorry, and the next afternoon she was determined to do better. While the old lady slept, she again laid the table, but this time she crept softly as a mouse across the room, bringing cup after cup, and saucer after saucer separately from the cupboard, fearful lest they should tinkle against one another and disturb the sleeper. Suddenly the grandmother awoke and cried: “What are you doing, child? Some mischief, I’ll be bound, or you wouldn’t be so still!” In this instance we see an utter absence of both sympathy and patience.

Those who would guard against the abuse of the word “Don’t,” and cultivate these two graces of home life, may with profit study that exquisite little poem of Coventry Patmore’s called “Toys.” In it a father tells how that because his little son has disobeyed him seven times, he has struck him and sent him to bed unkissed, adding the pathetic line of explanation:—

“His mother, who was patient, being dead.”

Then, fearing lest the child’s grief should prevent him from sleeping, he visits his bed, and finds the little boy in a deep slumber, with his lashes still wet with tears. In kissing away these tears the father leaves others of his own; and he thus explains the softening of his mood:—

“For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-veined stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells,
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray’d
To God, I wept, and said:
Ah, when at last we lie with tranced breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou remembrest of what toys
We made our joys;
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou’lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
‘I will be sorry for their childishness.’”

A. E. HOOPER.

A GOOD MANAGER, BUT A POOR WIFE.

THE woman who thinks of nothing but housework, though in many things affectionate, loyal, and industrious, is ever in danger of becoming but an indifferent wife. It is the domestic version of our Lord’s teaching concerning the mint, and anise, and cummin. By too close attention to the smaller household duties, the weightier matters of life and conduct in the home are lost sight of.

No one should keep high ideals more constantly in the foreground of the life picture which each of us is daily painting than the wife and mother. The busier and more work-a-day the life, the greater should be the effort to think high thoughts, and not to let the labour descend into mere drudgery, akin to the instinctive routine of the animal. Baking, sweeping, sewing, planning—these duties take the strength and time of the majority of housewives. But every one can recall many houses where every duty is exactly performed, yet where the essence of home life has evaporated. All is immaculate, but the hearts of the family are cold. There are no cobwebs, but the minds are narrow and small. Every material possession is here, but the inmates seek pleasure, interest, and sympathy elsewhere. It may seem unjust to lay so much of the deterioration of a home to the wife’s charge, but she is the bread dispenser, and it is not alone the material food she is to give forth, but that which shall feed the ambitions, steady the purposes, and purify the hearts of those for whom she has assumed her place.

A wife who has no interest in her husband’s pursuits, or who cares not to understand his perplexities, fails in her opportunities. The wife who shuts out social pleasures and relaxations because they bore her, or because she is

too busy, errs. She either forces her husband to seek pleasure without her, and drives the first wedge of divergence between them, or else shuts him into her own narrow atmosphere. And so, through all the experiences of home life, the wife fails if she looks at everything wholly from a material standpoint.

It is not strange when children hear nothing but petty talk, and see nothing but dull repeated work, that they grow up without a capacity for high thoughts, and lacking the power to resist moral temptations. Natures grow on what they feed upon, and purity of motive and elevated purpose must have their roots planted and watered when the heart is young.

A woman who thinks that her housework, which well-nigh overwhelms her, is all she can do, may be sure that there is no better use for a portion of her time than to daily lift herself out of the narrow confines of her labours, and to rest and refresh herself in new interests and broader sympathies. Any woman can do this, though all may not climb the same pathway or reach the same height. The opportunities may be few and the advantages slight, but faithfully used they will develop, and step by step the way will lead ever onward and upward. And the first step in the pathway is to see what piece of work can go undone, and the time be saved, rather than how much more the busy housewife can crowd into her already too hurried days.

Having thus breathed the broader air, if only briefly, let her persevere, assured that in this way is to be built the rounded, balanced character of the good wife—a higher and nobler creature than all the companies of “managers” beneath the canopy of heaven.

A MOTHER'S NOTES ON DRESS AND DRESSMAKING.

HATS and bonnets appear likely to assume larger proportions; indeed, some of our readers would be surprised to see the large velvet bonnets now exhibited in the windows



Fig. 5.

of the leading milliners. The crown is about six inches high, and the trimming is set up in front, towering far above the crown, and in such a way as to be swayed with the wind. When feathers are used a thin, pliable wire is fastened to the quill to add strength, and the same is inserted in loops of velvet, in order to keep them in place. Wide strings go with these bonnets, and also a border of white net. Some faces may look well under such bonnets, but we think we are safe in saying that it will be some time before they get into anything like general use. To suit these bonnets we find that the hair is being dressed lower down, and sometimes ornamented with a bandeau, which is made of velvet twisted round a strip of wire, and finished off with small loops and bows at the top.

A great variety of styles prevails for outdoor wraps. Thick woollen-stuffs and cloth are used for jackets and tight-fitting mantles, great preference being shown for matelasses in rather large designs; while for cloaks, thick plaids with a woven fringe at the edge are adopted.

Elderly ladies are wearing dolman-shaped capes of plush and velvet. These are lined with wadded silk or Italian cloth. Long jackets are often cut with the Watteau pleat at the back, or when the fronts are tight-fitting they are caught in with a band at the waist. Velvet and plush mantles are usually lined with a plain stuff, but all self-coloured fabrics are lined with some of the pretty shot silk linings which are now so popular. These add considerably to the finish of a wrap, but unfortunately they are not very strong, and have to be renewed before the garment is worn out.

Fig. 5 shows a lady's tweed dress, made in Princess style, which promises to be a favourite method of making both ladies' and children's dresses. This model has a fitting lining, which hooks down the centre, while the material is cut double-breasted on the right side, and after the lining is hooked, is brought over and fastened with buttons, the velvet front and collar being attached to the lining. The skirt opens down



Fig. 6.

the side over a gore of velveteen, and the sleeve is also finished with a deep velvet cuff. Buttons trim the side of the skirt, and the extra fulness for the back is laid in broad pleats. This dress takes six yards of cloth and one and a quarter yards of velvet.

Fig. 6. We feel sure that this pattern will become a favourite with all our readers who are requiring such a jacket. The style is suitable for a girl from eight to twelve years of age, and is at once stylish, comfortable, and neat. The garment is intended to reach to the bottom of the dress, and consists of a half-tight jacket, with a shaped frill of the same material set on under the turned-down collar. This trimming gives extra warmth over the back and chest, just where it is most needed. The full sleeve finishes with a similar frill, which falls over the tight-fitting cuff.

A firm tweed or cheviot cloth will do nicely for this jacket, which will take from two to three yards, according to the age of the child. A belt of cloth can be used in place of the girdle, if desired; certainly it will wear better.

Fig. 7. Here we show a young lady's jacket, which can be made with the Watteau pleat at the back, or half tight-fitting. A pleated piece is let in down the front, which could be formed of silk or velvet when the jacket is made of cloth, and the effective trimming on the collar and cuffs is of strips of ribbon, velvet, or military braid. One and a half yards of double-width material will be sufficient for this jacket.

Fig. 8. This shows a little girl's over-petticoat, and a little boy's under-drawers. It is always best to put these small undergarments on a bodice, so that the weight is supported from the shoulders instead of from the hips, which is very injurious. Flannel or flannelette will do for these garments, and each could be made out of a yard and a quarter of material. The extra piece shown at the back of the little petticoat is to make the dress stand out, but we do not think it at all necessary to add this unless the dress is of a very soft material. Embroidery to match flannel or flannelette may be bought in all colours.



Fig. 8.

Flat patterns can be supplied. Figs. 5, 6, and 7, 6½d. each; fig. 8, petticoat 4½d., pants 4½d., or 6½d. the two. Address, "M. C." Pattern, 9, Paternoster Row, E.C.